

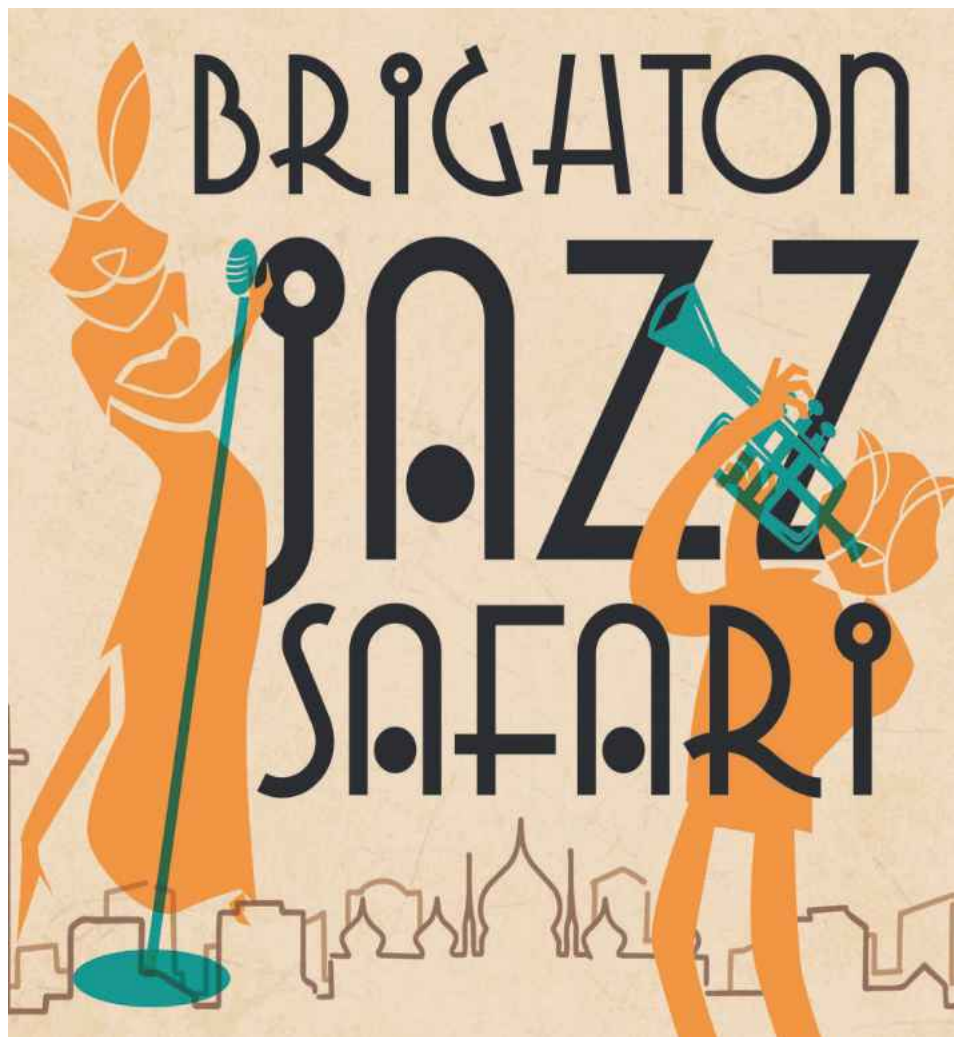
An abstract, expressive painting of a double bass. The instrument is rendered with bold, energetic brushstrokes in a vibrant palette of red, orange, yellow, blue, and black. The background is a mix of white and light beige tones, with some darker, more textured areas. The overall style is gestural and dynamic, capturing the essence of the instrument's form and sound.

SJM

Sussex Jazz Magazine

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SOUTHGATE
2020



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Cover: Daniel Casimir by Gina Southgate
Above: Joe Webb by Nicholas Andrews

Gina Southgate

I'm writing here as a live music painter and performer. I could say 'jazz painter' but that conjures up horrible paintings of Billie Holiday or Louis Armstrong copied from curling photographs.

I aim to paint what I see and hear, and interpret this onto a chosen surface in the moment. This can result in imagery that you can recognise as a musician and instrument, or it could be a blob with a splash and a scrape. It can also be that I'm performing myself making sound as a part of that process, or that I'm on the side-lines of a pin-drop gig where every movement I make could destroy the moment.

This month I've been in all of these situations and more. I'm starting in late January, this is my first month of writing for *SJM* so I guess I could start anywhere but this particular night feels like a good place to start. It's Jazz In The Round at the Cockpit Theatre. A monthly gig that I've painted at since its inception in January 2012. Always 3 class UK acts, always a soloist in the middle slot. More and more I love a soloist. I want to get to grips with the individual and how they approach their instrument and performance. I want to hone in close up on their mouth and hands, their stoop and rise as they blow, pluck, suck and stage their particular skill and speciality. Nowhere like a solo is a musician's dedication to their art so laid bare. This month I painted the female pioneer and jazz legend Deirdre Cartwright in this spot.

Deirdre Cartwright and Alison Rayner for years have hosted the female empowering Blow The Fuse nights at the Vortex. Coincidentally, bass clarinet player Cara Doyle and I had a gig at the January session. Using



a canvas tautly strung with fishing line as a developing backdrop to a soundscape playfully interpreted by Cara, who brings all the chops of a Guildhall classical music student to my chaotic performance ideas. Five gigs in, we were originally brought together by Cara's aunt, bass player Julia Doyle, an original Guest Star member. The same night veteran sax player Carol Gasser from the original Ivy Benson band topped the bill.



I chose to check out Daniel Casimir and Tess Hirst's album launch at the late gigs at the Royal Albert Hall put on in conjunction with Jazz re:refreshed. I'd painted Daniel a couple

of times playing with Jean Toussaint. Oh my, I love to paint a double bassist. They had the beautiful players Binker Golding and Chelsea Carmichael guesting.

The self-explanatory line 'nothing real happens in Dalston any more' won me over immediately. I bought the album *These Days*, it has lovely work from Robert Mitchell on keys. Reminiscent of old school vibes from Young Disciples etc, idealism and peace and love from the Dingwalls Sunday afternoon sessions that shaped us. True to that era where I wore Travel Fox high tops and lycra under denim cut offs, Tess signed the album with the words 'fight the power', title track to Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing* and a continually relevant mantra.



Across the pond at this time, CBGBs and the Mudd Club were still a thing. Sonic Youth were big; I first encountered Thurston Moore at the Jazz Café in the mid-nineties where he had invited some hard-core noise improvisers, my other-half reeds player Alan Wilkinsons included, to play. Thurston is now a local resident and when in town likes to play. Alan, meanwhile, runs a long-standing



improv club once a month called Flim Flam. Last month I got the extraordinary opportunity to perform with Thurston. For this I used my sonic 'bric a brac' kit. I couldn't handle the idea of doing this alone and it seemed the only person I could invite to bridge the air between us was vocal and performance legend Maggie Nicols. As a trio we brought the house down! One time guitarist with the Fall, Dave Tucker had organised another outing





for Thurston at Café Oto in Dalston with my favourite keys and electronics player Pat Thomas and percussion genius Mark Sanders. The packed house listened to a tight, complex, improvised soundscape reminiscent of the original Doctor Who theme. Whirring, grinding, sliding, squealing, noise cohesion at its controlled best.



For International Women's Day Cara and myself were joined by Hanna Mbuya on tuba to form a trio for Project Femme, a women's aid fundraiser. A mixed arts night in a gallery space in Herne Hill. Performing with these two young, talented, open-



minded, fine musicians to a completely up for it audience breathed life into me.



Last week I was invited to speak at Jazz Connects, a two day international conference with showcase gigs at the Vortex, home to my paintings and projects for years. I was invited to speak on the subject of jazz connections with other media, and its appeal to attracting a wider audience. After me, up to speak, was Penny Rimbaud, vocalist with Crass. His point was that nothing but the pure 'scream' of what we do is important. For me this month, this served as a reminder that so much that is real happened in Dalston.

Gina Southgate
15th March, 2020

Jazz Essentials

Michel Petrucciani
100 Hearts
(Concord/Blue Note)

In every respect, French pianist Michel Petrucciani was a phenomenon. Born in 1962 with osteogenesis imperfecta, brittle bone disease, which severely restricted his growth, he lived his life in pain, fracturing his bones more than 100 times before he even reached adolescence. He was so delicate that he was often carried across the stage to his specially adjusted piano stool. Yet he considered his disability an advantage, as he could have no other distractions, such as sport, to keep him away from music. He wryly remarked that “sometimes I think someone upstairs saved me from being ordinary.”

Well, ordinary his piano playing never was, for he was a virtuosic performer with a strong streak of lyricism, and a fair amount of showmanship. He recorded widely, notably in a trio with Wayne Shorter and Jim Hall, and as sideman to the revitalized Charles Lloyd, who was so inspired by the young pianist that he came out of retirement to work with him. In 1985 Lloyd walked out on stage for the Blue Note relaunch concert in New York with Petrucciani cradled in his arms. Hardened journalists welled up tearfully.

Despite his ensemble work, Petrucciani preferred to play solo. And one of his best solo recordings is this beautiful studio set, recorded in 1983 when he was merely 20. Its set list is judiciously chosen, with an austere Monkish take on Ornette Coleman's *Turn Around*, an intriguing own composition, *Three Forgotten Magic*



Words, a touch-perfect delivery of Charlie Haden's evocative *Silence*, a rollicking treatment of Sonny Rollins's *St Thomas* calypso, and a confident medley of four standards, notably *All the Things You Are*.

But by far the best is the concluding title track, another Petrucciani composition. *100 Hearts* is very simply constructed, just 100 bars in D major – “each bar is like a little heart to me,” Petrucciani explained – which roll out along much the same groove as Coltrane's reading of *My Favorite Things*. Over the deliriously repetitive melody, he starts to whistle in near-octave unison. The effect is like hearing a hundred overtones in your ears, and is quite magical. *100 Hearts* lasts for 12 minutes, but it should go on forever.

Michel Petrucciani died in January 1989, aged just 36. This set is a fine way to remember him.

Simon Adams

Simon Spillett

‘I’ll make an exception.’



Monday March 9th marked what would have been the 90th birthday of Vic Ash, legendary British modern jazz musician, long time accompanist to Frank Sinatra and the man who was, for two and a half years in the mid-1990s, my (one and only) saxophone teacher.

Of course Vic was much more than that - for around twenty-one years he was a good and trusted friend, a confidant, at times almost a grandfather figure to me, one who eventually became a working colleague too.

I've told the story of how we met many times.

Back in early summer 1993 I'd seen him play at my local jazz club - Merlin's Cave in Chalfont St. Giles - and then being a struggling teenage saxophonist in dire need of some musical direction I decided I'd ask for lessons.

Knowing Vic lived locally I looked him up in the telephone directory and, not being especially confident in my

ability to convince him verbally, instead I wrote him a letter - 'Dear Mr. Ash...'

Vic's playing on my first encounter with him had totally knocked me out. Yes, I knew he'd gained most of his reputation as a clarinetist - arguably the UK's finest jazz exponent on that instrument - but it was his tenor sax playing that had drawn me in on that local club gig: a warm, lyrical style that had trace echoes of many of my favourites - Hank Mobley, Zoot Sims, Harold Land, Stanley Turrentine - but with its own uniquely British twist (he once told me his first influence on tenor was Ronnie Scott). I simply loved it.

To my surprise my little entreaty to Vic didn't fall on deaf ears. No, about a week after my posting him a letter he called and invited me over for what he said would be a 'one off lesson.'

Needless to say I was thrilled and thought the day chosen for our meeting highly portentous: on the afternoon before going to see Vic I finally left the Sixth Form having just

completed my A-levels.

'From one career path to another...' I naively thought.

I was 18 and on my way at last.

That evening I nervously fingered my dilapidated tenor saxophone in Vic's living room, responding to his request that I play 'something, anything'.

'Hmm. Not a bad sound,' he mused.

He then tested my sight reading with a part from a Kenny Baker arrangement of *Them There Eyes*.

It was like a visit to an optician.

'Can you read this?'

'Er...not all of it.'

Finally, we jammed *Lester Leaps In*, with Vic doing a great deal more musical leaping than I.

And then came the verdict: the denouement (or quite possibly the denouncement) I'd been waiting for.

Vic drew breath and slowly began.

He no longer taught. He hadn't enjoyed teaching. He hadn't the time to teach. Nor did he feel he had the required patience to do so. And besides he wasn't really a teacher anyway.

It went on, until finally he stopped and looked at me.

'But for you, I'll make an exception.'

And so it began: two and a half years of expert tuition (more like mentorship, actually) at the side of one of the nation's best jazz instrumentalists.

Not only did Vic iron out my bad habits and get me practising properly (and yes, we started right from scratch with 'Tune A Day' progressing through to the at times fiendishly complex Otto Langey tutor). He also took me to gigs and recording sessions (including a memorable day at the BBC studios in Maida Vale during which I first met Iain Dixon, Jay Craig and Tina May, among

others) and generally acted as the kind of supporting champion we all need from time to time.

People often ask me what Vic taught me. I usually offer my standard glib comeback that he taught me everything I know but not everything HE knew. But the truth was he showed me how to really play the saxophone - not jazz per se - but the saxophone and for that I'll forever be in his debt. He made me realise that learning an instrument is a craft. The art bit, such as it is - that comes later.

Later on when I turned professional, Vic and my relationship grew into another level. We became colleagues who'd gig together often - including an event-packed tour to celebrate his 80th birthday in 2010 - and I collaborated on his long-awaited autobiography *I Blew It My Way*, published in 2006.

Vic was always an immaculate personality, both as a man and a musician, which was why his sad mental decline towards the very end of his life was so tragic to witness.

Our final gigs together in 2013 were shambolic and embarrassing as what we now recognise was dementia had begun to set in.

One night, Vic sat silently on stage beside me, unable to complete the gig but staring unnervingly at the audience who'd paid to hear him. It was heartbreaking.

And on the last time I visited him, he played the clarinet for me, his gorgeous tone intact and instantly recognisable but, as he confessed, he could no longer recall a single melody. This, for a man whose whole life since the age of 14 had been music, and who had once shared stages with such exemplars of 20th century song as Frank Sinatra and Johnny Mercer, was simply too much to bear.

When Vic died, aged 84, in

October 2014 I was asked to deliver the eulogy at his funeral. With friends and colleagues like John Critchinson, Alec Dankworth, Brian Dee and Lee Gibson present, it was a tough gig but I got through it, the tears I fought back only coming at the very close of my words.

It was then, looking across at the casket beside me, that it truly dawned on me that I'd never see him again, never share a car journey together and never again be able to call him up for the kind of advice that can only come from a man who'd done what he'd done - at the very highest level - for a lifetime.

I think of Vic often, frequently wondering what he'd say about this or that, how he might greet a bit of my news - be it mundane or musically important - and how he might regard my playing now, over a quarter of a century after we first met.

I'd like to think he'd be a little bit proud of me, just as I'm very proud to have felt his kind and guiding hand in my early progress. Sometimes it's like he's still here. I certainly feel I'm continuing to benefit from his wisdom. In fact, many of the things he showed me (in particular his warm-up exercises) I use with my students to this day.

It's funny - Vic and I were so close that writing this small tribute is actually far harder than penning a celebration of another, more distant musical figure. There are so many stories, so much to recall, so many memories that it's an impossible task to think of one defining anecdote.

That said, I think the moment that will live longest in my memory occurred in 2007, backstage at London's Mermaid Theatre.

I'd been nominated for the BBC Jazz Awards' 'Rising Star' category and despite having been invited to do

a day's rehearsal with the BBC Big Band (of which Vic was a member) and a full dress rehearsal run-through for the ceremony I was so green that I was still unsure if I was in with a chance of winning.

Following what was clearly a somewhat liquid lunch Vic bumped into me in the wings.

'Lischtern, Si...', he slurred at me. 'I'm not schupossed to schay thish...but you'll be okay...'

And with that he winked at me and toddled off.

He was right too.

Happy Birthday Victor. I still miss you x

Simon Spillett

Photo of Vic and I on a gig in August 1994, around a year after we first met. He was 64 years old: I was 19.



Jazz News



Coronavirus Postponements

Gigs and festivals have been cancelled due to the spread of the coronavirus COVID-19. American saxophonist Jerry Bergonzi cancelled his UK tour that included a gig and workshop at Jazz Hastings. Brighton Festival has also been cancelled for the first time in its 53 year history. Love Supreme Festival is under threat of cancellation.



Alternatives to Live Venues

With most venues across Britain closing their doors, many jazz musicians have been livestreaming either from their homes or from closed venues.

After the cancellation of SXSW Festival, the British Music Embassy put on a livestream event on Wednesday 18th March featuring Daniel Casimir & Tess Hirst, and Theon Cross.



Jazz at The Great Escape Festival

The Great Escape Festival, Brighton's annual festival of new music includes jazz artists Emma-Jean Thackray, GoGo Penguin, Joe Armon-Jones, Neue Grafik Ensemble and Sarathy Korwar. The festival was scheduled to run from Thursday 13th to Saturday 16th May.



Emergence Festival, Hastings

Yadasofi have been added to the line up for Emergence Festival. They join Jessica Lauren, Jason Yarde, Steam Down, Hexagonal, James Beckwith and others. The festival has since been postponed.

Patricia Pascal

Promoters of young jazz talent, Jazznewblood are celebrating their 5th year. Founder **Patricia Pascal** spoke to Charlie Anderson about its history and successes.



What gave you the idea to start Jazznewblood?

I first started my contact with the youth jazz scene in 2012 through my personal experience of raising two precocious young musicians and navigating the challenges of helping them develop their talent.

Along the years I watched and my kids were blessed with the amazing work done by London's talent development programmes like Tomorrow's Warriors or Junior Academy at Royal Academy of Music, among others that I got to know very well. I was privileged to have a front-row seat to witness the rise of a whole inspiring new young generation that reinvigorated jazz, much like a transfusion of new blood.

My circumstances of being a photographer, artist manager, passionate about talent development, having married into a family of musicians and having musical children, made me extra aware and sensitive to the struggles of becoming a musician, especially for those already with above-average talent at a young age.

I knew then and know now that

being surrounded by a supportive scene, working together to push young blood forward, is essential and I felt I had the skills, and determination, to contribute to that scene by creating a platform to add help and buzz. That's how Jazznewblood network started in February 2015.

Maybe a big difference in my work is the aim to focus on talent under 24. Real talent is ageless and if you've got it you should not be disregarded, underestimated or left behind, in terms of opportunities, just because you are younger.

Having promoted unique and talented musicians as young as 15, it has become my mission to spread the word about them.

Tell us about Jazznewblood and all of the different ways in which it helps upcoming musicians.

After more than 20 years working in the musical industry, both in the UK and in the international circuit, I've developed a good sense to identify talent.

I first started by using the power of the internet with Jazznewblood



Photo: Patricia Pascal

Twitter and Instagram to shout about any young talent I've spotted. After all, buzz is always good promotion. At the same time, I started using my photography to create an archive of young talent around on our website jazznewblood.org.

In 2016, in cooperation with Waterloo Creative Studio, I created #jazznewbloodALIVE showcase, part of the London Jazz Festival programme, a stage presenting new names. So far, we have introduced 27 new artists/bands, 125+ musicians, with an average age of 20 years old. The vision is a showcase festival premiering new music and new band leaders.

JazznewbloodALIVE was the first festival in London to exclusively head talented jazz musicians under 24, performing original jazz-inspired music, not standards. With the help of a small team of volunteers and unconditional support from

SteveFunkyfeet (video and photos) and Theo Pascal, behind the recording production, we have sold out most years and have been successful in securing a 44% rate of female leaders and a good diversity balance.

The professionally recorded live audio of all the sets is archived at <https://soundcloud.com/jazznewbloodalive>.

Each year, on International Jazz day we release a compilation with one live song per artist representing each year's showcase (<https://bandcamp.com/jazznewblood>). I also offer a photo promo session to equip each artist with 3 essential tools: professional promo photos, recorded music and videos. These tools will help them get other gigs.

Jazznewblood also runs a permanent scheme to provide low-cost promotional photos to artists under 24. More than 30 young musicians have used it.



Photo: Patricia Pascal

Over the years I have built up contacts with a network of venues, promoters and festivals. I regularly send out recommendations and act as a freelance agent to secure further performing opportunities, such as debut gigs at London Jazz Festival, Ronnie Scott's, Pizza Express, New Generation Jazz and Love Supreme for young jazz talent.

I don't believe in quick success but in building a strong foundation. Jazznewblood is here to help youth jazz talent build that foundation and complement the work done by educational jazz organisations.

Which musicians have been your big success stories over the past 5 years?

I do not doubt that all artists I supported since 2015 are the future of jazz but considering they are still very young, we probably will see their success unfold only in a couple of

years ahead.

In our first [#jazznewbloodALIVE2016](#) we showcased some of today's household names like Kokoroko, Seed Ensemble, and Mark Kavuma. Other artists like Zeñel, Quinn Oulton, Rosie Frater-Taylor, Ife Ogunjobi, Brothers Testament, Nihilism, Kasia Konstance, Zoe Pascal, Noah Stoneman, Donovan Haffner, and Peter Wilson are already making a name for themselves. Others like Sam Barnett, Alex Ridout or Roella Oloro are studying in Switzerland and the US and will graduate soon.

At our [#jazznewbloodALIVE2019](#) showcase which was dedicated to [#FemaleJazzPower](#), we introduced amazing female artists like Isobella Burnham (presently rising like a rocket), Saskia Horton, Emma Rawicz, Asha Parkinson and Tara Cunningham.

I advise you to keep an eye out for all these names because they will leave their mark in the UK's music

scene.

What have been the highlights?

Any small wins in their career are big wins for the scene. Their success is Jazznewblood's success...

I can't take credit but it's rewarding to know that Jazznewblood is part of their path in some way.

Some highlights:

- Our annual jazznewbloodALIVE showcases, as part of London Jazz Festival since 2016;
- Debut concerts at Love Supreme Festival by Zeñel and Cesca;
- Ife Ogunjobi and Alex Ridout debut Pizza Express sold-out gigs, among others booked as part of Breakout sessions curated by Jazznewblood;
- Zeñel, Brother's Testament and Quinn Oulton's debut at Ronnie Scott's which were sold-out concerts, opening for big names;
- Supporting Sam Barnett when he released his acclaimed debut album at 16 years old in 2016, look out for the new album coming out soon (<https://www.sambarnettsound.com/>);
- The fact Kokoroko & Seed Ensemble live songs were recorded at #jazznewbloodALIVE2016 and were included in our compilation that's been streamed on Spotify more than half a million times;
- Seeing my photos taken under Jazznewblood #promophotoscampaign used to promote gigs, included in debut EPs/albums or featured to promote young talent in magazines like *Jazzwise* or *Sussex Jazz Magazine*.

What plans do you have for Jazznewblood?

I hope I can continue all the work around the annual showcase festival and continue to introduce new emerging names and be able to

develop other projects around photography, audio and video, always to champion unique youth jazz talent.

After 5 years of work on a non-profit basis, some grant support will be necessary to allow the platform to grow, and changes will be made to start that process.

More important than ever, I want to focus on exchange projects to expand the showcase to Europe and get young talent from different territories to connect and keep the creativity flowing.

I also have big plans for projects with even younger children and younger audiences. I believe there's so much to be explored within jazz/improvisation as a tool to develop essential life transferable skills, like the capacity to experiment without fear; creativity; communication; dealing with unpredictability, and knowing how to improvise. It's not all about knowing jazz history and developing the technical language.

I advocate jazz for all kids from a young age. I'm a believer in the power of jazz as a universal language and I think we can use it to connect us all as humans not just as musicians.

Link for the pre-order of the next compilation

#jazznewbloodALIVE2019
out on 30 April:

<https://jazznewblood.bandcamp.com/album/jazznewbloodalive2019>

<https://www.jazznewblood.org/>



Joe Webb

Pianist **Joe Webb** spoke to Charlie Anderson shortly before his first UK tour to promote his forthcoming EP *For Everything Else*.

How did you get into playing piano?

I got into piano through my grandad when I was about seven years old. He used to come up and visit when I lived near Swansea in a place called Neath. He'd come and play the piano for me and it used to mesmerise me. I just got so obsessed with it. I always wanted to learn whatever he played. In a way he was like an early role model. He was more pub piano, playing *When The Saints Go Marching In*, and all those really classic songs. It used to put me into some kind of spell. Eventually my mum got a proper little piano, an acoustic one instead of an electric one. I just got absolutely obsessed with it and I would play it for hours and hours each day. I'd listen to some classic records. I was really obsessed with Jools Holland, actually, when I was about 8 or 9. Then some really nice people gave me some Oscar Peterson records, and *Kind of Blue* as well. That was a gateway into the more classic jazz. After I played I was on tour with Moriston Big Band, from the age of about 12 until I was 16, doing club circuit gigs in Swansea, Llanelli and places around there. I then applied to go to music college where I did 4 years at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in Cardiff. I graduated in 2012 and basically moved straight to London, and now I'm here.

How did you find it going straight

from conservatoire to the London jazz scene?

I was really surprised because you live in almost like a bubble, because everyone plays music in college every single hour of the day for four years. It was always quite a lot of pressure and thinking 'each of us is going to have to reinvent the wheel here'. Obviously, when a lot of us left music college it was a big surprise. It was quite hard to make a living from just doing your own compositions. One of the trumpet players I went to music college with, Evan Clegg, he used to run a Sunday afternoon gig in Twickenham (in a place called the Ailsa Tavern). He was starting to get into a lot of the 1920s Jelly Roll Morton, Fats Waller style of music. It was something that I'd definitely heard of but never, ever played.

After I graduated from Cardiff I moved to Basingstoke, which is where so much of my family lives, so it was quite an easy commute to come in and out of London. I used to go back and forth once every week to go and do this gig and then get into some of the repertoire, which is the total opposite of what I was playing in music college and what I had been playing for years. It was a real education, looking at the early swing music, tunes from Teddy Wilson, Fats Waller, Art Tatum through to Oscar Peterson. These were all things which I don't think were given as much airtime in music college. It's a

lot easier to connect the dots between Charlie Parker and Fats Waller, and all the bare bones of what bebop was to become. A lot of that music was simplified, harmonically and rhythmically, but it really filled in a lot of the gaps for me in terms of learning and how improvisation was primarily constructed.

After about six months of doing that, I moved to Stepney Green where I lived with a bandleader of mine. I wrote arrangements for him and did a lot of touring and playing similar music to that. A few years later I joined a band called Kansas Smitty's, and through that I met Adrian Cox, who I play with as well. Then I started to write my own music and explore the different genres of jazz.

Tell us about your piano trio.

My trio has got two of my favourite musicians. When I was at Cardiff I used to come up to London every couple of weeks to see them. It's Tom Farmer on the bass and Shane Forbes on drums. They're both members of the great British jazz band Empirical. They're really amazing thinkers and really creative. They've really brought my music to life. When writing your own music you can quite often go mad in the room. You're the only person to really hear it for months and months and months. Then, when you play it with someone like Shane and Tom, they hear a whole different angle to it, which makes it way more entertaining for me. We can pull it apart and everything. They're really amazing.

What sort of music will you be playing? New compositions?

Yeah, it's going to be music from the last EP which I released in October, *Daydreamer*, and the new one that I'll be releasing on 20th March called *For*

Everything Else. So there are two 5-track EPs and we're working towards an album which will be released in March or April next year.

There are other people that you work with, including Rob Luft. Tell us about the other projects that you're involved with.

I've been extremely lucky to be playing with such amazing musicians. Rob, Kansas Smitty's house band and Adrian Cox. It's always nice to have a mixed palette of styles. With Rob Luft I play a lot of Hammond organ in that band. That's something that I've done since moving to London. The music is quite West African influenced and it's a real fusion of so many styles. It's amazing to play with Corrie Dick, Joe Wright and Tom McCredie. Their strengths are that they're super-sonically aware. They play the music and it will sound incredibly different every single time we play it. The sonic ethos that they've been using is really inspiring to play with.

With Adrian Cox we've just been touring his new album *Now Is Spring*. I co-wrote a lot of the music with Adrian for that album, which is quite heavily swing and New Orleans referenced and is much more traditionally focussed.

And I also play with Kansas Smitty's, whose new album will be out in May and again is inspired by so many corners of music. There's obviously quite a lot of swing. Having said that, there's not loads and loads of swing influence but I guess it's more Ellingtonian influence. It's only when you go into swing that the harmony's a bit more unusual and it's a bit more Ellington big band influenced. Some of the grooves are a bit different to what the band has been branded as for the last five years or so.

It's quite nice for the brain to be



Photo: Nicholas Andrews

able to dip in and out of these worlds of music.

What sorts of music do you listen to?

I try to listen to as much music as possible, not only jazz. I guess I listen to quite a lot of Art Tatum. He's one of my real heroes. I love listening to a lot of Brad Mehldau as well. I love Bob Dylan. I really love Paul Simon, especially the stuff he did with Art Garfunkel.

I actually got into music and wanted to become a proper musician when I bought the album *What's The Story, Morning Glory?* by Oasis. That really changed everything for me. I still listen to that now. Every time I listen to that album I have exactly the same feeling that I have done since the very first time I listened to it. I wouldn't necessarily put it on first thing in the morning but I guess there are different moods. I love listening to music. If I'm travelling or whatever, if I'm on a train or a plane, it's quite nice to just look out the window and listen to

something. Seeing something like totally different scenery. Obviously there's a really big link there. I definitely try to draw a lot of influence from that when I'm writing music.

In terms of listening, I love Arthur Rubinstein as well. He's an amazing classical piano player.

I hope the tour goes well.

I'm really excited. I've never toured my own project, let alone an originals project so I'm so excited.

For the last 7 years it's been building up to this and to have my own identity rather than being somebody's piano player. I'm super excited for it.

Joe Webb Trio

Scheduled to appear at The Verdict, Brighton on Saturday 11th April but since postponed.

<https://www.joewebbmusic.com/>

Words... Marilyn du Sax



I was born in The Wirral, but moved to Manchester when I was 7. I had 2 sisters and 6 girl cousins who we'd meet at Grandma's house most Sundays. I remember questioning if I was really a boy, but stopped short of thinking I was a girl, which is why I don't think of myself as trans.

In secondary school my best friend started to play clarinet, this seemed cool, so I persuaded my parents to buy me one. At some point I discovered some of my dad's jazz LPs - Jack Teagarden, Acker Bilk and Duke Ellington's Nutcracker Suite stand out. I was trying to play along with the records most days after school and decided that I really wanted to play saxophone.

I was about 15, and I persuaded my parents to buy an alto sax with the promise that I'd get a Saturday job and pay them back. I had lessons from the husband of my mum's work colleague who'd been an army bandsman. He lent me records and taught me how to play with jazz feel and sound.

Armed with my alto, a passion for jazz, but little ability I joined the stage band with my friend and began a social life centred on music that continues to this day. This band was amazingly good, being under the leadership of another ex-army bandsman. We played almost every Sunday all around Manchester, once in front of an audience of 2,000 in the Free Trade Hall for Remembrance Sunday. Maybe due to this experience I hardly ever experience nerves or stage fright.

I loved music and wanted to be a musician, but I felt I wasn't good enough and went to university and got a graduate job in a brewery. Several years and employers later I was in Belgium, where I started to play sax more seriously, taking lessons from a few different pro players. In the amateur world I could always hold my head high, but I was aware that professionals were at a completely different level and I wouldn't have dared to do what I'm doing now, until two things changed my mind.

One was advice about focussing more on rhythm than harmony. To be honest I've always had a greater passion for funk than bebop and found this advice really liberating. The other influence was a quote from Edith Piaf to 'Use your faults, use your

defects; then you're going to be a star'. For decades I'd felt a lack of masculinity, but now I decided to embrace my femininity as a gift, and combine with a simple, rhythmic approach to saxophone and recreate the classic organ/sax/drum line up of the 60s with the stage name Marilyn du Sax.

There are better sax players than me in Brighton, but when I say that to audience members at gigs they don't seem to care, or even acknowledge it. So I no longer worry about other players - I just do what I do, for the audience, and their reaction is enough. I'm still motivated to improve, but my practice is focussed on conveying more emotion and passion rather than technical or harmonic exercises.

I'm honoured to play with professionals in Brighton. I sometimes explain that I feel like I'm a Sunday League player who is asked to captain a Premier League football club. During a gig I try to be 'in tune' with both the band and the audience - my attention switches between how and what we're playing as a band, and how the audience is reacting - and I try to build a virtuous cycle of positive energy. The more the audience respond, the more freely the band play, letting their passion radiate and fill the room. I think music is unique amongst the arts in having a direct communication to the emotions, by-passing the thinking part of the brain. Most non-musicians have little language to analyse what they hear, and so they enjoy and respond without thinking, which is a beautiful, spiritual experience.

I am quite influenced by the work of Eckhart Tolle, and part of what I try to do in performance is to make people feel a connection with each other. His work helped me to accept myself how I am. People see that acceptance, and I hope it helps people to feel better about themselves, particularly those who don't fit traditional gender roles. If I can do that, it will be my greatest achievement.

Words: Marilyn du Sax

Photo: Lisa Wormsley

<https://www.facebook.com/marilyn.dusax>

Big Band Scene

Patrick Billingham



In view of the current coronavirus Covid-19/SARS-CoV-2 crisis, my theme this month is cancellations. Last month the question was raised of the relative immunity to the weather of indoor big band gigs compared with those held outdoors. Extreme weather, not only high winds and heavy downpours, but also sudden snowfall can create cancellation conditions.

A key factor in deciding whether or not to cancel is the rhythm section. It is just about possible to continue without drums, although any charts involving a drum solo would have to be ditched. But it is feasible to get by if only one of the others is missing.

On the other hand, I expect we have all been at gigs where the horn sections have been down a player or two, which has usually been fine, apart

from the occasional thin harmonies.

Storm Ciara in February caused one big band to cancel while another went ahead with a depleted line-up.

The cancelled gig was to be held at a seafront venue accessible only from the beach, and most of the band's personnel, located considerable distances away, would have had difficulty travelling. The decision to cancel was made the day before.

The other band, based, and performing, in Brighton delayed a decision until lunchtime on the day. Most of the band, especially the entire rhythm section, live within the city boundaries. After consultation, and assessing the weather, it was agreed to go ahead. The few who lived some distance away were advised not to try

to make it.

Back to what is likely to have a major impact on the big band scene. At the time of writing, the number of confirmed cases of Covid-19/ SARS-CoV-2 in the UK is increasing exponentially. Already one Sussex rehearsal venue, a large room within a residential complex, has temporarily closed its doors to outside organisations.

As far as I know, most scheduled performances are going ahead, but this may change. Especially if the Government follows the examples of some other countries by announcing restrictions on mass gatherings. While the rhythm section can play wearing face masks, the horns may experience some difficulty.

Assuming normal service, the monthly residencies take place except for The South Coast Big Band. This month, the second Sunday is Easter Day. Because some key members are unavailable, the band decided to cancel, but will be occupying their usual slot again in May, Covid-19/ SARS-CoV-2 permitting. However, the other regular event, Big Band@Brunswick, on Sunday the 5th, has been cancelled.

Also on the 5th, is the late afternoon event: Revenge of The Big Band: Brighton Jazz Mafia, with the Dance Aces from Swing Patrol, at Ralli Hall in Hove (01273 202254).

On the 18th, the Tonbridge based The Jazz Project Big Band, directed by Mike Hatchard, present a programme: 100 Years Of Big Band Jazz & Swing at The Kino Teatr, St. Leonards-On-Sea (01424 457830).

The following week-end, lunchtime on Saturday 25th, Downsbeat with Jo Kimber appear at The Ropetackle Arts Centre, Shoreham-by-Sea (01273 464440).

Looking ahead to May's Big

Band@Brunswick on Sunday 3rd, The Sussex Jazz Orchestra puts on another Tubby Hayes Special, featuring Tubby Hayes specialist Simon Spillett.

Full details, including timings and entry charges for these gigs can be found in the current monthly listings. However, by mid-March, at least three gigs have already been cancelled and two bands have cut rehearsals for at least a month.

This message came regarding an event mentioned last month and scheduled for the 4th. "It is with great disappointment that The JP Big Band Charity Concert in aid of Cystic Fibrosis has had to postpone... until further notice. We will be coming back as soon as possible for you all but for now I'm afraid you'll have to wait for us! For those of you that have purchased tickets, please, please do hold on to them to use for when we come back!"

In view of this prevailing uncertainty, it is strongly recommended that you check with the venue that an event is still going ahead. The Facebook page, Big Bands of Brighton is useful for up to date news.

Next month: Who knows? If you would like your band featured, and I have not already contacted you, please get in touch. Or if there is anything else, such as gig news, or feedback on this column, that you would like me to include in May's Big Band Scene, please send it to me by Sunday 12th April. My email address is g8aac@yahoo.co.uk.

Live Reviews



Photo: Anya Arnold

New Generation Jazz: Zeñel *The Verdict, Brighton* *Friday 28th February, 2020*

Founded in 2016, one of the most highly dynamic and forward looking electronic-based trios Zeñel took to the Verdict stage in front of a large and enthusiastic audience on the last Friday of February. They performed a sensational set at last year's Love Supreme festival, have appeared at Ronnie Scott's and the Royal Albert Hall late night sessions, while also broadcasting on both Worldwide FM and Radio 3. Frontman, trumpeter, keyboard exponent and guitarist, Laurence Wilkins is also a composer, teacher and producer. An ex-student of The Royal Academy Of

Music he is experienced in hip-hop, electronica and fusion as well as straight ahead jazz. On further multiple keyboards Noah Stoneman from North London is an ex-member of NYJO and was a finalist four years ago in The BBC Young Jazz Musician Of The Year competition. The award winning drummer Zoe Pascal, originally from Portugal, is no stranger to the Verdict stage. One of the most in-demand players on the UK scene, the sheer exuberance of his playing is always guaranteed to wow the crowd, as it most certainly did on this the last gig of the current New Generation Jazz series.

The night was one of high intensity, challenging and totally original music from three young

musicians of virtuoso standard, encouraged even more than usual by the highly enthusiastic crowd. Anyone who was expecting a ballad or conventional jazz of any style would have been mightily disappointed, but none were, as the sheer brilliance and musicality of the performance shone through. In simple terms the trio could easily be described as trumpet, keyboard and drums, but that definition would be totally inadequate and not take into account the myriad of electronic devices available to the players and the inexhaustible sound combinations that they were able to produce. In terms of overall concept the mind could easily be taken back as far as the Miles Davis' *Bitches*



Brew game-changing album of 1970 or the work done in later years by Bill Laswell to technologically enhance and segue together the music of that time. Even that description would not take into account the facilities available from today's highly advanced, computer controlled instrumentation. Music of this type does not really need song titles, and indeed hardly any of the thirteen pieces on the night were given one, except to say that the six numbers that comprised the first set were taken in order from their just released debut CD. Rather than being looked at as songs per-say, perhaps it would be better to view and listen to them as multi-layered panoramic soundscapes. Some would describe much of the music as close to 'free form', in many ways, however there seemed to be a crazy logic about it, and always an underlying structure keeping the listener fully engaged. The pure improvising ability on amplified

trumpet by the leader was in the awesome range, with a constant flow of ideas and tempos carried out simultaneously with the operation of various keyboards and computer controlled equipment. Noah Stoneman has proved many times his ability on the standard acoustic piano, but on this occasion showed equal prowess on a number of electric devices, providing a firm bass for the other instruments, as well as performing at the head of the mix when required. Both the sight and sound of drummer Zoe Pascal was key to the overall group performance, providing a constant high-powered thunder and high speed finesse, which as usual had the crowd enthralled. If such

a bar that was set in the first half could be raised, it was after the interval with a set of new music, unrecorded as yet and occasionally still 'work in progress'. The tempos were more enhanced, the playing even more adventurous and the crowd more ecstatic, which was an extremely appropriate way to end the New Generation Jazz series for the year. Things get underway again on Friday 24th April, with the exciting pianist Dominic J Marshall and his Devils Of Moko trio, but until then we can learn more about and listen to samples of this tremendous forward looking band, that closed the highly successfully 2019/2020 season by visiting www.zenelmusic.com.

Jim Burlong

Martin Speake & Ethan Iverson
The Verdict, Brighton
Saturday 22nd February, 2020

Martin Speake's developing association with Ethan Iverson continues to yield such satisfying results that it's no surprise that tonight's gig is packed to budget airline economy-class levels of intimacy with a connoisseur crowd eager to witness this latest iteration. Even though there's been no new studio recordings from the pair since 2018's acclaimed *Intentions* album, there's plenty of evidence here tonight of their continuing dialogue.

After a typically ebullient introduction from irrepressible host Andy Lavender, proceedings start with a tribute to Lyle Mays - *Hidden Vision* has Iverson playing a simple, melodic four-chord cycle, over which Speake draws elegant arabesques, creating a mood that's suitably mournful but uplifting. They build together in intensity, as bassist Calum Gourlay adds a spare, sonorous anchor and Iverson's fellow expat Jeff Williams contributes colours and textures in a manner recalling the late lamented Jon Christensen. Both Speake and Iverson share a rather austere, professorial onstage demeanour that's at odds with the hip playful swing of the follow-up, a twisting blues line that kicks off with a bravura solo from Williams, while *Mufti* conjures up the spirit of Eddie Harris for some school's-out boogaloo. Speake shows his versatility in the depth and breadth of his language, now speaking fluent Coltrane-blues on the former tune, appropriately named *Bouncy*, now ripping out some appropriately greasy funk phrasing on the latter, but maintaining his clear, supernaturally even Paul Desmond tone throughout each different avatar.



Iverson has a similarly polyglot facility - his solo on *Mufti* builds from ingenious variations on a one-handed three note lick to a hypnotic gamelan-like shimmer, then veering off into furiously virtuosic Cecil Taylor abstractions before bringing back the funk to finish with big Les McCann block chords. Speake's ballad *Moving On* inspires Iverson to an improvisation of imposingly poised command - on an uptempo, Ornette-ish variation on *Rhythm Changes* he conjures up a storm of creative chaos that resolves beautifully in a spontaneously conceived counterpoint.

The second set brings further evidence of Speake's versatility as a composer and improviser, with a passionate and immaculately plotted solo over a long modal piece providing a particular highlight, but the final treat comes with the encore: a wonderfully creative reading of the venerable standard *My Heart Tells Me* with Iverson delivering a comically precise, cartoonishly creative contribution, Speake's full, burnished tone and perfect phrasing shown to maximum effect, and everyone swinging like crazy.

Eddie Myer



Photo: Lisa Wormsley

Jelly Cleaver

Casablanca, Brighton
Friday 28th February, 2020

Guitarist, vocalist and composer Jelly Cleaver released her second album last year, entitled *The Dream Jazz Manifesto*, an illustration of her socially conscious songwriting skills as well as her keen sense of musicality. Both of these were evident at her rare appearance in Brighton. She began with *VI II V*, a soft and dreamy melody that easily transports you to another place. *Angela*, dedicated to social activist Angela Davis, contained a varied mix of time feels, performed expertly by drummer Tash Keary, who excelled during the drums and sax duet in the middle of the arrangement. *What Is Understanding*, a composition with a strong melodic line and a danceable groove, worked really well as a feature for impressive saxophonist Beth Hopkins.

A newly composed piece that doesn't appear on the album, *Black Line* is an honest and direct commentary on the evils of the fossil fuel industry appropriately performed

as a slow, mournful ballad. By contrast, the next tune, *Ego*, began as an upbeat number but transformed into a hard rock vehicle for Beth Hopkins. The slow, delicate *Prayer for Rojava* was dedicated to the people from the region of Northern Syria that has been affected the most by the recent conflict. Cleaver ended her set with *Yarl's Wood*, a stinging critique of the notorious detention centre.

Saxophonist Beth Hopkins performed some absorbing improvised counter melodies that blended well with the rest of the band. Jelly Cleaver exhibits a refreshing honesty in her highly original songwriting and displays vocal skills that she effortlessly adapts to the mood of the music. A varied set showcased not just her composing and vocal abilities but also her accomplished skills as a bandleader and guitarist.

Charlie Anderson



Photo: Moses Boyd at Field Day by Lisa Wormsley

Moses Boyd
Patterns, Brighton
Wednesday 11th March, 2020

Drummer Moses Boyd's performance in Brighton was his penultimate tour date before his return to South London to play at Brixton's Electric. He was touring to promote his new album *Dark Matter*, which displays his composing skills and sees him collaborating with the wide range of artists on the London scene that he has worked with over the past few years.

They started with the new album's opening track, *Stranger Than Fiction* which began in a relaxed ambient style but soon heated up, especially with an intense solo by saxophonist Quinn Oulton. An extended drum solo from Boyd transitioned into an older composition, *Axiom*, from 2018.

The track *2 Far Gone* is one of the highlights of the album, with guest Joe Armon-Jones. Performed live it was a showcase for talented keys player Renato Paris.

The next tune, *B.T.B.*, was an upbeat Afrobeat groove with a

swirling, hypnotic introduction from guitarist Artie Zaitz. Oulton's sax solo felt as if they were really starting to groove and connect with the audience, only for it to be the final tune of the set. Thankfully they returned for an encore of Boyd's most popular composition thus far, *Rye Lane Shuffle*.

Boyd's biggest talent, aside from his obvious drumming abilities, is his skill in arranging for larger ensembles. With a smaller touring band, compared to the larger ensembles he has appeared with at festivals in recent years, the members were given greater freedom in their soloing. Whilst some may have mourned the absence of a vocalist and some of the extended solos may have seemed self-indulgent, the band created their own sound world and a highlight was the band's positive chemistry.

Boyd knows how to lay down a groove and as a bandleader knows how to bring out the best in soloists, very much leading and encouraging each member of the band.

Charlie Anderson



Photo: Anya Arnold

Xhosa Cole with Jay Phelps
The Verdict Brighton
14th February, 2020

Xhosa Cole is a man who can't be hurried. Winning the BBC Young Jazz Musician of the Year might pressure some ambitious players into premature studio projects, but two years after the event Xhosa is here, still unrecorded, still engaged in exploring the tradition via this latest chordless quartet iteration. The easygoing warmth of his unassuming Midlands persona is offset by an extremely sharp-tailored suit, and his fellow frontman Jay Phelps is equally nattily attired. Opener *The Moontrane* shows how well suited they are sonically as well as sartorially: matching each other's breathing in spontaneous counterpoint, with Phelps's mercurial high register in thrilling contrast to Xhosa's dark toned melodic explorations. Bass and drum team James Owston and Jim Bashford keep

the energy at full throttle. There's an interlude of free-blowing duet between the leaders that segues seamlessly into Gigi Gryce's *Salute To The Bandbox*, then Richard Rogers' *Manhattan* is taken at a midtempo lope that features Xhosa at his most Rollins-like, all hoarse-toned, quirkily melodic assertiveness, while Phelps delivers a perfectly conceived and executed statement going from hip minimalism to furious Freddie Hubbard flurries and back. Given the line-up, a nod to Ornette is perhaps inevitable, and *Ramblin* gets a super high energy revision, the two horns engaged in a frantic dialogue over bass thrum and cascading drums before bringing it down to the hushed closing phrases, delivered as one unified voice.

Xhosa and Phelps get a ballad feature each, contrasting Phelps's poise, superbly polished accuracy and encyclopaedic compendium of trumpet history with Xhosa's gruffly lyrical

directness that opens out into a bravura extended free coda. The exploration digs deeper in the second set: there's a nod to the history of UK's immigrant jazz community with a Dizzy calypso, and an impressive original by Owston that has the gravitas of a late-60s Shorter Blue Note in its heavy swing before developing into some adventurous free blowing. Owston has an impressive precision and power: Bashford is more usually heard in a free context, but swings hard and brings an additional level of fearless commitment to proceedings. *Scrapple From The Apple* is a furious four-way conversation as everyone takes turns leading: the communication and commitment between the band reach breathtaking new levels, and the sell-out crowd bay for more.

In contrast to the laden intensity of his blowing, Xhosa's announcements have been all relaxed, sunny affability

throughout. Introducing *When You Wish Upon A Star* as an encore, he suddenly changes the mood. "What would you wish on a star for? We don't always like to be seen to help people when we can, but where I live the levels of homelessness are getting worse than I've ever seen. Times are only going to get tougher for those at the bottom, and the interpersonal thing is going to be ever more important. What can we do to help each other?" The band tear into the tune, pulling at the limits of the form. Then they die away, leaving Xhosa holding a single high note. In a gesture full of meaning, he allows the note to swell and waver as both hands paw helplessly at the saxophone, as though seeking to articulate something beyond the music. This band have something quite special going on: try and see them if you can.

Eddie Myer

Album Reviews



Ben Holmes
Naked Lore
(Chant Records)

Throughout the history and evolution of music from Hayden's String Quartets to Bill Evans' mastery of the piano trio, chamber music has always been a

delicate art form that instantly reveals the raw fundamentals of both music and performer. Regardless of instrumentation or genre, the vulnerability of the music stripped down to its primary form demands immediate attention from the observer. It is impossible to deny the fragile intimacy involved between musician and audience in the performance of chamber music, when one is so exposed one must remain focused and genuine. Nowhere more can this be felt than in *Naked Lore* the new release by New York based trumpeter and composer Ben Holmes. For awhile now this Brooklyn resident has been frequently in demand from various artists from across the musical stratosphere, pop rock act Gogol Bordello and legendary klezmer clarinetist Michael Winograd are just a couple of names in a long list of

impressive and diverse collaborations. However, here we see Holmes in a different light as both leader and composer drawing on his Jewish heritage and armed with a rotary valve trumpet Holmes explores the music of his roots through the themes and scales associated with his ancestry. Each track throughout the album holds its own feeling of time and place; we are never left to encounter the same thing twice, with some pieces echoing the intensity of Spanish flamenco, others the lively step of slavic folk music and some tinged with the sun-soaked mysticism felt in music of the Middle East. Accompanying the trumpeter on his journey of ancestral discovery are guitarist Brad Shepik, a seasoned veteran of the American jazz scene, and percussionist Shane Shanahan, a highly sought after musician and fully-fledged member of YoYo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble. The chemistry and interplay between these three musicians is obvious from the very start. Although Holmes leads the trio with his smooth tone and fleeting runs, there's never a feeling of dominance from any one voice. The group move together as a unit, while two may lay back to give one a moment to shine, they still maintain the feeling of fusing together as one. This is displayed to the full in highlight track *First We Were Sad; Then We Danced* opening with a slow and smokey unison line between Holmes and Shepik while Shanahan lifts the curtains with some light airy percussion, all to suddenly break into a hot frenzied groove while strings and brass light the fire with some virtuosic soloing. This is just a small piece of the varied flavours on this album and a good listen will be thoroughly rewarded. With a passion for soul searching, and joined by musicians who enable each other the freedom of genuine expression, through this album Ben Holmes encapsulates some of the key points in the historical journey of Jewish folk music.

George Richardson



Dave Liebman
Earth
 (Whaling City Sound)

Soprano sax specialist, patrician educator and author of several books on jazz theory and practice, veteran of Miles and Elvin Jones' bands and well-respected bandleader and recording artist in his own right, Dave Liebman is an artist who doesn't believe in standing still. This album is the latest in a decades-long project to "musically depict manifestations of the four natural elements", and to this end Liebman has surrounded his fluid, biting-toned soprano with an array of electronic instruments and signal processors to create a kind of electro-free-fusion. His credentials as a major compositional force in the music are evident in the startlingly original, carefully wrought theme that's stated in unison at the end of *Earth Theme*, which comes after a protracted free-time textural exploration with all manner of harmonisers and modulation effects being freely applied to soprano, keyboards, bass guitar and miscellaneous unidentifiable reeds alike. The album's compositions are created according to an intervallic scheme of Liebman's own devising, and there's no denying the power of his artistic imagination or the rigour of his theoretical framework but unfortunately the preponderance of outré electronic squelches, bleeps, squeaks and wibbles have a cumulatively comic effect that unintentionally undermines the

seriousness of the intent. *Grand Canyon/Mt Everest* dials back the textural experimentation in favour of a hushed sense of space that is genuinely evocative, and *Concrete Jungle* shows how fast and tight the band can swing - *Galaxy* is a kind of utterly demented 16th note funk that defies categorisation, showcasing the extraordinary polyrhythmic talents of drummer Alex Ritz. The band are awesomely accomplished, and there's a powerful musical intelligence throughout that leaves a lasting impression: this certainly sounds like nothing else currently on offer.

Eddie Myer



Zeñel
Extreme Sports

Precociously talented teenagers Zeñel have already attracted attention for their high-energy live sets, not only on account of the youthful zest of their playing but also because the way that their mastery of the digital affordances of Ableton software enables them to create a spectacular digital soundscape without resorting to prerecorded playback. This is their first recorded offering, re-creating their live set in the studio without overdubs, and the results are outstanding. Go to *Zozo is Zozo/The Curse* for a full on blend of low end squelch, dark dubstep influenced electronic textures and powerhouse drumming from Pascal. All three players have convincing jazz level

chops - check out Wilkins' confidently modernistic, fleet and supple trumpet work, with a hint of Christian Scott, on the previously mentioned track, and throughout the album, and Noah Stoneman's nimble Hancock-isms on Rhodes on the swaggering *Ewok Dance*. They are also not scared of writing a catchy tune or two, as evidenced by the insouciantly jaunty *Bubbleleaves* and the naggingly catchy *Bi*. What impresses most about this release is the way that they have managed to blend their jazz sensibilities with their instinctive understanding of contemporary electronic dance music to create a genuinely original and integrated musical vision that's both impressive and hugely engaging. This promises to be the start of a really enjoyable musical journey.

Eddie Myer



Moses Boyd
Dark Matter
(Silent Wish SWRCD1)

Boyd came to the fore with his strident sax and drums duo with Binker Golding, and followed up with the dubstep-abstract *Rye Lane Shuffle*, so it's something of a surprise that his first album release as leader, songwriter and producer should be dominated by a relatively easy-on-the-ear Afrobeat inflected contemporary jazz funk. *Stranger Than Fiction* features ambient keys, mournful sax melodies and nocturnal muted trumpet over a scintillating rhythm

track of skittering hi-hats and low-end brass bassline from the Cross brothers - the feel is actually quite similar to some of Eddie Henderson's 1970s fusion LPs for Blue Note. *B.T.B* has massed horns over a pulsating afrobeat groove climaxing in some fluid, biting-toned guitar work from long-time associate Artie Zaitz: *Y.O.Y.O* has a similarly afro feel with dreamy horns floating over Theon Cross' tuba growl and some alternately psychedelic and jazzily clear-toned interludes from the superb Zaitz. Keys man du jour Joe Armon-Jones gets a feature as well, his piano rippling effortlessly over an uptempo two-step on *2 Far Gone*, reminiscent of the Yusuf Kamaal format. The vocal contributions are nicely judged to inject a contemporary feel to the album - Poppy Ajudha is coolly soulful over an ambient Sonar Kollektiv groove background while Nonku Phiri's track pushes the envelope a bit further, with her voice and Nubya's sax drifting together over a darkly abstract electronic soundscape. *Only You* has a similarly ambient-electro feel, but the general vibe throughout the record is warmer and more organic. The intensity rises noticeably for Obongjayar's feature *Dancing In The Dark* - no relation to the Dietz/Schwartz song popularised by Artie Shaw, it's an angry tale of urban alienation that simultaneously lifts and darkens the impact of the album. It's nice to hear some candid audio clips from much-loved elder statesman Gary Crosby featured on the epic downtempo closer *What Now?*.

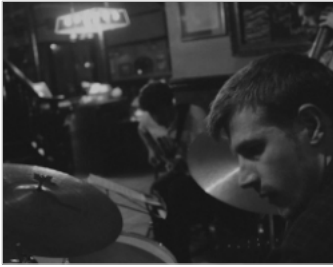
Eddie Myer



SEN3 *Live*

As well as releasing two acclaimed studio albums since 2017, SEN3 have developed a fearsome reputation as a live act, with regular appearances across the capital and beyond. Their idiosyncratic approach to fusion combines some tight written sections with wide open improvisations that concentrate on playing with texture and dynamics on top of killer grooves: the live setting gives them plenty of room to develop their ideas and roll with them, building up monstrous amounts of energy on uptempo explorations like *The Drop*. Guitarist Max O'Donnell wears his Wayne Krantz influences on his sleeve but has plenty of personality of his own to add to the mix, whether through the chiming whammy bar chords of *Night Pay* or the thrilling high velocity shreds of *Pigeon* and his mastery of his banks of effects pedals means that the textural explorations are always deployed effectively and never drift off into electronic overkill. He also has a nice line in altered-scale soloing that Allan Holdsworth might have enjoyed, but keeps it in check to concentrate on a more contemporary post-rock values of dynamics and atmosphere. Bassist Dan Gulino and Ronnie Scott's regular Saleem Raman have all the necessary precision and power to keep the energy up and to maintain focus so that the long improvisations don't languish in a sea of reverb but stay crisply creative - Gulino's punchy chording on *Plate Vice* is particularly satisfying and Raman is on point throughout, tight and grooving or extrovert as the occasion demands. SEN3 are a band who's truest representation is perhaps in a live setting and this clear and punchy recording is a compelling document of how exciting they can be.

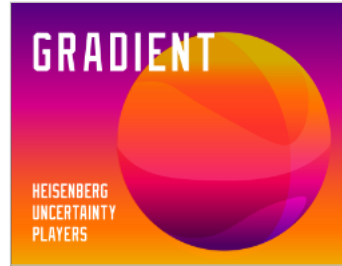
Eddie Myer



Moostak Trio
Moostak Trio

This extremely accomplished debut from young guitarist Christelis matches him with two simpatico talents for some meditative introspection. Drummer Dave Storey is already a bandleader in his own right, and his imaginative technique, grounded in jazz but flexible enough to accommodate all sorts of textural experiments, gels perfectly with the superb Andrea Di Biase's rich tone and sure intonation. Christelis keeps the tone clean with some judicious use of reverb but adds some tasteful electronic touches to the free-leaning explorations of *Solenganis*. *Stella* and *Blues For Jo* are hushed, languid melodic pieces with an ECM feel, while 'Haring Tree' picks up the pace for some puckish pirouetting lines before developing into a tasteful minor key groove that recalls the 90s collaborations between Bill Frisell and Marc Johnson. All the tunes are linked with some short textural sketches, spontaneously improvised in the studio, which contrast with the carefully constructed written pieces like *The Garden* with its meticulously plotted counterpoint between guitar and bass. *Zero Hours* is an attractively simple melody with a distinctly folk feel that develops gently though subtly different iterations to provide the album highlight. The album's consistently hushed mood makes this an inversion of the standard guitar power trio, but there's plenty of personality to engage the attention throughout.

Eddie Myer



Heisenberg Uncertainty Players
Gradient

HUP are something of a Chicago institution, as well as being a distinct anomaly - a 17-piece big band specialising in original compositions and arrangements by the band members, who have managed to survive and thrive since 2011 playing regular shows around their home town. They've evolved a sound that's contemporary and broadly pop-based, but stake out a different territory to acts like Snarky Puppy. Slickly funky tracks like *Boombox*, *Plasma* and *Nevertheless She Persisted* evoke the slinky sound of LA studio fusion, like an expanded vocal-free Steely Dan - *Subject/Verb/Object* and *Four Sides Of the Circle* borrow from the more adventurous vocabulary of modern classical composers (a debt made explicit in their reworking of the 1st movement of Mahler's 3rd) - *Schedule Loss* has a kind of contemporary funk-up James Last feel. The trombone-heavy, super-tight horn sound is quite distinctive, the soloists all have something to say, and Dan Parker and Jon Wenzel are a superb and flexible rhythm team. Director John Dorhauer supplies all the compositions (apart from the Mahler, of course), and while he can turn his hand convincingly to a range of styles, this diversity comes at the expense of a clear identity over the course of the record. Nevertheless there's a great deal to enjoy here and fans of contemporary big band sounds, and of high-quality listening in general, should check it out.

Eddie Myer

Listings Notice

With venues across Britain having to close their doors due to the spread of COVID-19 there are no live performances for our listings.

But there is still plenty of live jazz happening.

Artists are livestreaming concerts along with solo and duo performances from their homes.

As many jazz artists are struggling, now is a good time to show them your support during this difficult time.

You can support artists through purchasing music and merchandise via Bandcamp (as this is the platform that gives the most directly to musicians).

You can also support musicians directly with donations via their website or Facebook page.

Sussex Jazz Magazine will be doing its part to help keep the jazz scene alive and thriving:

As well as continuing with interviews, columns and album reviews we'll also be reviewing livestreams and video content and giving our recommendations.

Details of livestreams can be found on our listings page:

www.sussexjazzmag.com/listings



Mulatu Astatke, who was scheduled to appear at the now cancelled Brighton Festival in May.



Ashley Henry, scheduled to appear at Patterns in Brighton on 22nd April as part of his UK tour.

Venue List

All Saints Church, The Drive (corner of Eaton Road), Hove BN3 3QE
Arundel Jailhouse, The Undercroft, Maltravers St, Arundel BN18 9AP
Azur Beach Pavilion, Marina Pavillion, Marina, St. Leonards-on-sea TN38 0BU
Back Beat Bar, 5-6 Western Rd, Hove BN3 1AE
Bannatyne Spa Hotel, Battle Road, Hastings
Brighton Beach Club, The Milkmaid Pavilion, 26 Kings Road Arches, Brighton BN1 2LN
Cafe du Jardin, 15 Malling St, Lewes BN7 2RA
Capitol Theatre Studio, North Street, Horsham, RH12 1RG
Chalk, 10 Pool Valley, Brighton BN1 1NJ
Chequer Mead Theatre, De La Warr Rd, East Grinstead RH19 3BS
Chichester Jazz Club, Pallant Suite, 7 South Pallant, Chichester PO19 1SY
Con Club, 139 High St, Lewes BN7 1XS
Concorde 2, 286A Madeira Dr, Brighton BN2 1EN
Deans Place Hotel, Seaford Road, Alfriston, Polegate BN26 5TW
Dorset Arms, 58 High St. East Grinstead RH19 3DE
Drift Inn Cafe, 91 Queens Rd., Hastings
Fudge's Bistro, 196 Church Rd, Hove BN3 2DJ
Green Door Store, 3 Trafalgar Street, BN1 4FQ
Hand In Hand, 33 Upper St. James's St., Brighton
Herstmonceux Castle, Wartling Road, Hailsham BN27 1RN
Horsham Sports Club, Cricket Field Rd, Horsham RH12 1TE
Jazz Hastings, The East Hastings Sea Angling Association, The Stade, Hastings TN34 3FJ
La Havana Jazz Club, 3 Little London, Chichester PO19 1PH
Lion & Lobster, 24 Sillwood St., Brighton BN1 2PS
Mamma Putts Afro-Caribbean Restaurant, 23 Kings Rd, Saint Leonards-on-sea TN37 6DU
NUR Restaurant & Lounge, 13 Robertson St, Hastings TN34 1HL
Patcham Community Centre, Ladies Mile Road, Brighton BN1 8TA
Patterns, 10 Marine Parade, Brighton BN2 1TL
Pavilion Cafe Bar, Denton Lounge/Marine Parade, Worthing BN11 3PX
Pavilion Gardens, New Road, Brighton, BN1 1UG
Pavilion Theatre, Marine Parade, Worthing BN11 3PX
Porters Wine Bar, 56 High Street, Hastings TN34 3EN
Queen Victoria, 54 High Street, Rottingdean BN2 7HF
Robertsbridge Jazz Club, Village Hall, Station Rd., Robertsbridge TN32 5DG
Safehouse, at The Verdict, Brighton
Seafront Terraces, Rottingdean, East Sussex BN2
St. Mary's Church, The Street, Cray's Lane Thakeham RH20 3ER
St. Nicholas of Myra Church, Church St. off Dyke Road, Brighton, BN1 3LJ
St. Paul's Arts Centre, 55b Chapel Rd, Worthing BN11 1EE
Seaford Head Golf Club, Southdown Road, Seaford BN25 4JS
Speakers' Corner, 44 George St., Brighton BN2 1RJ
Stanmer Church, 8 Stanmer Village, Stanmer, Brighton BN1 9PZ
Steyning Jazz Club, Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Church St., Steyning BN44 3YB
The Assembly Rooms, The Council House, North Street, Chichester, PO19 1LQ
The Basketmakers Arms, 12 Gloucester Rd, Brighton BN1 4AD
The Bee's Mouth, 10 Western Road, Brighton BN3 1AE
The Better Half, 1 Hove Place, Hove BN3 2RG
The Black Dove, 74 St James's St, Brighton BN2 1PA
The Bristol Bar, Paston Place, Brighton, BN2 1HA
The Brunswick, 1-3 Holland Rd, Hove BN3 1JF
The Bull Inn, 27 High Street, Battle TN33 0EA
The Chequer Inn, 41 High St, Steyning BN44 3RE
The Cloak Room, 81-82 St James's St, Brighton BN2 1PA
The Constant Service, 96 Islingword Rd, Brighton BN2 9SJ
The Depot, Pinwell Rd, Lewes BN7 2JS
The Dome, Church St., Brighton BN1 1UE (Concert Hall, Corn Exchange, Studio Theatre)
The Dorset, 28 North Rd, Brighton BN1 1YB
The Fishermen's Club, Royal Parade, Eastbourne, BN22 7AA
The George Payne, 18 Payne Avenue, Hove BN3 5HB
The Hare & Hounds, 79-81 Portland Road, Worthing BN1 1QG
The Hartington, 41 Whippingham Rd, Brighton BN2 3PF
The Hassocks Hotel, Station Approach, Hassocks BN6 8HN
The Hawth, Hawth Avenue, Crawley RH10 6YZ
The Horseshoe Inn Hotel, Windmill Hill, Herstmonceux, Hailsham BN27 4RU
The Hothampton Arms, 49-51 London Rd, Bognor Regis PO21 1PR
The Hummingbird Restaurant, Brighton City Airport, 15G Cecil Pashley Way, Shoreham-by-Sea BN43 5FF
The Idle Hands, 59 Queens Rd, Brighton BN1 3XD
The Komedia, 44-47 Gardner St., Brighton BN1 1UN
The Lamb in Lewes, 10 Fisher Street, Lewes BN7 2DG
The Mesmerist, 1-3 Prince Albert St, Brighton BN1 1HE
The Old Market, 11A Upper Market St, Brighton BN3 1AS
The Paris House, 21 Western Road, Brighton BN3 1AF
The Plough Inn, Vicarage Lane, Rottingdean, Brighton BN2 7HD
The Ropetackle, Little High Street, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex, BN43 5EG
The Rose Hill, Rose Hill Terrace, Brighton BN1 4JL
The Round Georges, 14-15 Sutherland Rd, Brighton BN2 0EQ
The Royal Sovereign, 66 Preston St, Brighton BN1 2HE
The Six Bells, The Street, Chiddingly BN8 6HE
The Snowdrop Inn, 119 South Street, Lewes, BN7 2BU
The Sportsman, Hassocks, at the crossroads of Cuckfield Road and Gatehouse Lane in Goddards Green, Nr Hurstpierpoint BN6 9LQ
The Southern Belle, 3 Waterloo Street, Hove, BN3 1AQ
The Steam Packet Inn, 54 River Road, Littlehampton BN17 5BZ
The Verdict, 159 Edward Street, Brighton BN2 0JB
The Village, 129 Islingword Rd, Brighton BN2 9SH
The Waverley, Marine Dr W, Bognor Regis PO21 2QA
Trading Boundaries, Sheffield Green, Fletching TN22 3RB
Unitarian Church, New Rd, Brighton BN1 1UF
Village Centre Hall, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint, BN6 9UU
Westgate Chapel, 92a High Street, Lewes BN7 1XH
West Hill Tavern, 67 Buckingham Place, Brighton BN1 3PQ
West Hill Hall, Compton Ave, Brighton BN1 3PS
Ye Olde House at Home, 77 Broadwater St E, Worthing BN14 9AD

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Pete Recommends...



Al Cohn and Shorty Rogers *East Coast /West Coast Scene*

My recommendation this month is an important historical document. In 1954 the record producers at RCA Victor decided to set up two contrasting sessions which would capture the differences between the jazz scene in New York and that in Los Angeles. This was a time of transition; Blue Note and Prestige were beginning to capture the new styles developed by Horace Silver, Art Blakey and, of course, Thelonious Monk. Sonny Rollins and John Coltrane were beginning to appear over the horizon.

Al Cohn's session features a beautifully scored arrangement of *Autumn Leaves* and two jam sessions framed by some of Al's best writing for ensemble. The real interest is in the style of these musicians at that time. Al stands out for quality, but is closely matched by Joe Newman, heard here at his very best, especially on *Autumn Leaves*. It is good to hear guitarist Billy Bauer outside the circle of Lennie Tristano. The style Al had in mind seems to be a kind of rejuvenated Basie, which was soon to be rejected

through the power of the new music coming from Blue Note.

Shorty was still absorbing the influence of the *Birth of the Cool* sessions, but the stylistic influences on show here are more interesting. For example, Pete Jolly gets *Cool Sunshine* started with a fine piano solo which illustrates the style which would become familiar from the work of Russ Freeman, Lou Levy, Claude Williamson and, with even greater power, Hampton Hawes. Jimmy Giuffre is beginning to develop his command of the clarinet, while Barney Kessel shows the full range of his mature technique. Some fine jazz is played by everyone here, but they are all outclassed by Zoot Sims, who begins his solo on *Cool Sunshine* with a gorgeous break and plays the best jazz on this whole album.

[*East Coast - West Coast Scene* was issued on RCA CD ND 74404]

Peter Batten

Subscriber Extra



Many thanks for supporting Sussex Jazz Magazine.

We'll be continuing with the magazine as best we can over the coming months.

For May and June we will be going online-only as printing and deliveries are likely to be disrupted. Then we'll review the situation.

We will extend everyone's subscription by two months, as we'll be making our May and June issues free to everyone.

If you're yet to renew your subscription then you can do so from July.

The listings page on the website now includes details of live streams and is updated regularly.

I hope you all keep safe and well.

All the best,
Charlie Anderson
Editor, Sussex Jazz Magazine

Terry Pack



Photo: Lisa Wormsley

A musician's reflections on the effects of the Coronavirus crisis

What a thing it is to be a musician: to write and arrange music, to practise and rehearse, to play and perform.

In so many ways, I am perfectly suited to this enforced self-isolation. I spend so much time alone as it is, and always have. In a normal day I practise the bass, I write music, I arrange. In my breaks, I read, I walk, I play tennis, I sleep and these days I read and write bollocks on t'interweb. These activities take up most of my time.

I am solitary by nature, but I am also gregarious: I like rehearsing, teaching and performing with my fellow musicians, my colleagues, my

friends. In a good month, I play between 20 and 25 gigs, and I rehearse regularly. In a good month, I teach several lessons and do workshops. This part of my time is very important to me.

Even after a few days of self-isolation, I miss this contact and interaction. The most important aspect of being a musician, for me, is the time spent 'doing it'. As a bass player, I need to play with others, and want to do so. The bass is the heartbeat of the band, the fulcrum between the rhythm and the harmony. I love this role, and have loved performing it since I was 14. For nearly 50 years.

At times, I have played more, at others less, as my life has taken different turns and I have followed different paths, but being a musician has always been at the heart of it all. I have made so many friends, people who tolerate my quirks and peculiarities, my failings and my insecurities.

I have been to so many places, from dingy rock clubs in Dudley and Middlesbrough to university gigs in Bristol and Aberdeen, from rock, blues and jazz festivals to fabled venues in London and Amsterdam. The thing I love most is the camaraderie of the road. The transport cafes and the services of pre-motorway Britain in the mid-1970s, passing the brown sauce to members of Uriah Heep and Colosseum at 2pm at The Blue Boar, Watford Gap.

Over the last 20 years back in Sussex, I have made lots of new friends and played countless jazz gigs, functions and the rest. This enforced hiatus is strange, and I don't like it. It robs me of a key part of myself and of my interactions with people who are important to me. Making music is such an elemental thing: the connections between the musicians and with the listeners in the audiences validate our need to do what we do. Something that is impossible to

express or explain to those who don't get it. I already feel a bit lost without it.

I don't like the loss of income, either. Like most musicians, I get by on very little, and the prospect of earning nothing at all for several weeks is really alarming. I'm relatively secure compared to many of my younger colleagues, but I remember my days sharing freezing cold houses and a council flat in Brixton in the 1970s and the early 1980s, living on a diet of baked potatoes and baked beans for most of that time until things fell into place. I don't know how I will survive this crisis and its fallout. How many pubs and clubs will still be open after several weeks of inaction? How many festivals will return next year?

So, it's a return to a monastic life for the next few months. A spud is baking in the oven and the beans are in the microwave. The heating and the lights are off to save on the bills and I'm wearing an extra layer to stay warm. The bass and Sibelius are vying for my attention. My routine reads like an unlikely series of 1950s Miles Davis albums: *Sheddin'*, *Writin'*, *Readin'*, *Walkin'*, *Eatin'*, *Sleepin'*.

See you on the other side, I hope.

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